



Chloroquine

(Anti-Malarial Medication)

What You Need to Know

Deployment Medication Information Sheets (DMIS) are provided by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM). Written for soldiers and their families, they provide basic information on deployment medications that are intended as guidance only; consult your health care provider for more information.

What are chloroquine tablets?

Chloroquine tablets are used to prevent and treat malaria. The type of drug prescribed by your health care provider will be based on the area of the world you are traveling to and your medical condition.

What is malaria?

Malaria is a serious, but preventable parasitic disease, spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Symptoms may include shivering followed by high fever, accompanied by confusion, headache, and vomiting. If not treated, symptoms can recur at irregular intervals for many years.

Do I need to take chloroquine tablets?

- Chloroquine tablets are one of several types of drugs to prevent malaria. The type of drug prescribed by your health care provider will be based on the area of the world you are traveling to and your medical condition.
- Chloroquine tablets are also used to treat certain infections of the intestinal tract and certain types of skin problems.

How do I take the medication?

- Store at room temperature away from sunlight and moisture.
- Take chloroquine with food to prevent stomach upset.
- Take this medication exactly as prescribed.
- Do not stop taking it without consulting your health care provider. It is important to continue taking it for the length of time prescribed. Stopping therapy too soon may not treat the infection and can lead to active disease.
- While taking this medication, your health care provider may schedule lab tests to check your eyesight, hearing, and blood.
- Do not share this medication with others.
- Do not donate blood for 3 years after taking chloroquine.

What does the military require?

Chloroquine may be required for duty or deployment in areas where there is a risk of contracting malaria. The use of this anti-malarial medication will be based on the degree and length of exposure and the prevalence of drug resistant strains of the disease in the area(s) of travel and an individual's health status.

Are there any side effects?

- Nausea, vomiting, stomach upset, cramps, loss of appetite, diarrhea, tiredness, weakness, or headache may occur the first several days as your body adjusts to the medication. If these effects continue or become bothersome, inform your health care provider.

- Call your health care provider if you develop any changes in your sight such as blurred vision, trouble seeing at night, or problems focusing clearly.
- Also, report if you have any difficulty hearing or experience ringing in the ears.

Is there any reason I shouldn't take chloroquine?

- Tell your health care provider if you have pre-existing liver disease, blood disorders, or psoriasis.
- Children are very sensitive to the effects of chloroquine. It is important to keep this and all medications out of the reach of children.
- Tell your health care provider of any other medication you are taking, (including nonprescription), especially cimetidine (Tagamet®), kaolin (Kaopectate®), or magnesium trisilicate (Gaviscon®)*.

What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding?

- This drug should be used only if clearly needed during pregnancy.
- Since small amounts of this medication are found in breast milk, consult your health care provider before breast-feeding.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose for any reason, take the missed dose as soon as possible and then continue the usual dosing schedule. Do NOT "double-up" on doses.

You can avoid getting malaria!

- Eliminate mosquito-breeding sites by emptying water collected in outdoor containers or debris.
- Remain in well-screened areas, particularly at dawn, dusk, and early evening when mosquitoes are most active.
- Use mosquito nets.
- Wear loose clothing that covers most of the body.
- Bed nets and tents can also be soaked in or sprayed with permethrin.
- For optimum protection, permethrin treated clothing should be worn with DEET repellents on exposed skin.
- It is also important to consider the use of insect repellent when traveling in environments with biting insects. The repellent should be applied to any exposed areas of the skin. The most effective compound is DEET (N,N- diethylmetatoluamide), an ingredient in most insect repellents.

Be sure your medical record shows that you have received this medication.

Where can I get more information?

- Health care provider at your military treatment facility.
- CDC Specific Disease web site (for malaria): www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm

*Tagamet®, Kaopectate®, and Gaviscon® are registered trademark brands and does not imply endorsed by the Department of the Army.

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